



Memorandum

TO: Historic Landmarks Commission

FROM: Courtney Damkroger

SUBJECT: SF01-07-045
485 S. 15th Street

DATE: December 17, 2001

APPROVED:

DATE:

BACKGROUND

This Single-Family House permit is for a project located at 485 S. 15th Street, within the Naglee Park Conservation Area. The proposal seeks to alter an existing, 1,472 square foot, single family home by adding 341 square feet to the first floor and creating a new second story of approximately 1,637 square feet. The current zoning on the subject 0.22 gross-acre site is R-1-8, Single-Family Residential and is designated Medium Low Density Residential on the San Jose 2020 General Plan Land Use and Transportation Diagram.

The Historic Landmarks Commission reviewed this Single Family House permit at its October 3, 2001 meeting. At that time, the Commission unanimously voted to forward the following comments to the Director of Planning:

- The plan be revised to fully comply with the Single Family Design Guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and be brought back to the Commission for review and comment.
- The massing is not consistent with the existing vernacular streetscape and adjacent properties. They recommend that the massing be reduced and the second story be set back from the first.
- The architectural style should not be changed from a period revival to Arts and Crafts.
- The also noted that support of this proposal may set an unwanted precedent in the neighborhood.

A Single Family House permit is required under Title 20 of City's Municipal Code for additions to single family homes that are listed on the City's Historic Resources Inventory. Single Family House permits involving historic resources are referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission on an as needed basis. The applicants revised their plan for this project and are returning to the Commission for review and comment on the new design. This new project proposes a total building height of over 30' which requires Planning Commission recommendation and final approval from the City Council as noted in Title 20 of the City's Municipal Code.



ANALYSIS

Since the October 2001 meeting, the applicant has made an effort to understand the comments made by the Historic Landmarks Commission and Planning staff and has explored other alternatives for the addition/remodel project. Planning staff is generally supportive of the more recently proposed project.

Single Family Design Guidelines. The Guidelines state that in designing a project one should consider:

- Limiting the “building profile” of the new house or expanded house to an area generally consistent with the profile of adjacent houses.
- Setting the second story back from the front and sides of the first story a distance sufficient to reduce the apparent overall scale of the building.
- Significantly limiting the size of the second story relative to the first story, including any addition to the first story.
- Placing at least 60 or 70 percent of the second story floor area over the back half of the first story.

In this revised proposal, the project does set back the second story addition 8.5’ to help distinguish the profile of the existing historic structure and approximately 56-57% of the new square footage is located towards the back of the first story. The floor plan was redesigned so that most of the profile of the existing historic home will remain. The adjacent properties are smaller in size and massing but by setting back the second story addition over the original home and placing the bulk of that massing towards the rear of the house, the scale and massing of the original structure is still identifiable from the street.

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. Standards 9 and 10 apply.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing size scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings provides additional guidance for interpreting Standards 9 and 10. Specifically,

“Locating the attached exterior addition at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of a historic building; and limiting its size and scale in relationship to the historic building.”

“Designing new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.”

The new proposal maintains the architectural style of the historic building and builds upon that style. A hip roof is proposed, rather than a gable. Since the second story addition is set back, a good portion of the original hip roof will be maintained. Please see the attached plan set detail (Sheet____) in order to understand how the proposed second story addition will impact the upper portion of the original hip roof. The project proposes to maintain the hip roof to a certain point, shown on the plans, and then project up with a triangular shaped feature to imply the completion of the hip roof. The original dormer will remain. While this project does not comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, the proposed revisions are a substantial improvement towards meeting their intent.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends that the Commission forward a recommendation to the Planning Commission finding that the proposal meets the Single Family Design Guidelines in that:

- The proposal does not change the existing architectural style of the historic home.
- The second story is set back from the front of the first story a distance sufficient to distinguish the original historic building from the new addition.

Courtney Damkroger
Historic Preservation Officer

Attachments

Cc: Kevin Mequet
Jeffrey Hare
Lorance and Joan Wilson